



ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION AT THE CROSSROADS BETWEEN ESP, THE LIFE SCIENCES AND THE HUMANITIES

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Abstract: *Given the new plethora of challenges that young learners are facing, both culturally, health-wise, and on a personal identity/sanity level, the paper makes some major points on possible solutions coming from the academic humanities, with a focus on the need for meaning, communication, and self-expression. In the present study, from the point of view of biosemiotics, the issue is targeted through EFL methodology made available in English learning environment.*

• **Introduction**

Ecological education has emerged as a large research domain at the intersection between the life sciences and the humanities, promising to become a relevant agent of change. This framework also builds on semiotic approaches, resulting in a growing bulk of edusemiotic research which is relevant both for education and for the pressing challenges we are facing.

• **Material and method**

The methodology of this research builds on sustainable language learning and qualitative research, while also relying on the ecolinguistic approach to holistic educational models. The study also draws on ecosemiotics, language ecology and complex systems theory.

• **Results and discussions**

Drawing on the literature in the field, as well as personal observations and shared exchange of best teaching practices with peers, we hypothesize that building skills in verbal expression is no longer sufficient for learners to find their way in the current information jungle. What is needed, above the given contents to be acquired in any given field of knowledge, is a larger cultural awareness in personal self-expression and more largely in social communication. Therefore, the study develops an integrated methodology of ecosemiotics and holistic pedagogies, under the umbrella of the humanities.

• **Conclusions**

The paper has shown that language learning and holistic pedagogy have the potential to develop soft skills and a personal value system in learners.